serve**montana**

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

Continuation Grant Review Score sheet

Applicant:		Reviewer:	

Scoring
0 -   Did not meet the expectation/requirement
1 -   Met the expectation/requirement
2 -   Met the expectation/requirement <u>&</u> demonstrated positive experience

MONTANA COMMISSION ON
community service

Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Issues
AmeriCorps Grant Award Review Process

Thank you for volunteering for the Grant Review Workgroup. This is a big responsibility and it is vital we provide the most thorough possible evaluation to ensure we put forward the strongest applicants we have from our state. The Grant Review Workgroup will be reviewing all new, recompeting, and continuation grant applicants.

Your designation as a Grant Review Workgroup Member requires you be fully aware of policies regarding conflict of interest and the privileged nature of the applications.

Conflict of Interest
Prior to reviewing any proposals, you must inform the Governor's Office of Community Service (OCS) of any potential conflicts of interest or appearances thereof. If you become aware of any potential conflict of interest as you review an application, you must immediately notify a OCS staff member. Examples of potentially biasing affiliations or relationships are listed below. The Grant Review Workgroup and OCS will determine how to handle any appearances of or actual conflicts of interest and will inform you regarding what further steps, if any, to take.

Note: Grant Review Members should review these possible conflicts prior to the review process and sign the Conflict of Interests statement.

A conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict may occur if you are directly or indirectly affiliated with an organization that has submitted a grant proposal for this review. As a reviewer, you must inform the Grant Review Workgroup and OCS of any such potential conflicts. Examples of affiliations that may constitute conflicts could include any of the following:

1. Your personal submission of an application to OCS or the Corporation for National and Community Service. If you have submitted an application, or have been personally involved in the preparation of an AmeriCorps State application.

2. Affiliation with an applicant institution.

- Current employment or are being considered for employment, at the institution or a consulting, advisory, or other similar position.
- Any formal or informal employment arrangement with the institution.
- Current membership on a visiting committee, board, or similar body at the institution.
- Ownership of the institution's securities or other evidences of debt. (Minor or indirect holdings are not considered conflicts.)
- Any office, governing board membership, or relevant committee chairpersonship in the institution. (Ordinary membership in a professional society or association is not considered an office.)
- Current enrollment as a student. (This is only a conflict for proposals or application that originate from a department or school in which one is a student.)
- Received and retained an honorarium or award from the institution within the last 12 months.

3. Relationship with someone who has personal interest in the proposal or other application.

- Related by marriage or through family membership.
- Business or professional partnership.
- Employment at the same institution within the last 12 months.
- Past or present association as thesis advisor or thesis student.
- Collaboration on a project or on a book, article, report, or paper within the last 48 months.

4. Other affiliations or relationships.

- Interests of the following persons are to be treated as if they were yours: Any affiliation or relationship of your spouse, your minor child, a relative living in you immediate household, or anyone who is legally your partner that you are aware of would be covered by Section 1, 2, or 3 of this Statement (except for receipt by your spouse or relative of any honorarium or award).
- Any other relationship, such as close personal friendship, you think might tend to affect your judgment or be seen as doing so by a reasonable person familiar with the relationship.

Confidentiality of Applications
Grant Review Members are given access to information about applicants for use only during the evaluation process and for discussion with fellow Grant Review Members and OCS personnel. Therefore, you must not use information for your personal benefit or make it available for the benefit of any other individual or organization. You may, however, share any general information about OCS and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

I have read the information regarding Conflict of Interest included in the AmeriCorps Grant Review Instructions and understand that I must contact the appropriate Governor's Office of Community Service official if a conflict arises during my term of service as a reviewer. I also will not divulge any confidential information I may become aware of during my term.

Name (Print Please): _____

Signature: _____

Review Panel: _____

Instructions for Scoring Applications

The Grant Review Workgroup role is critical to ensuring the selection of high-quality grant proposals. As a Grant Reviewer your primary responsibility is to read grant applications, review them for quality, and reach consensus on proposal quality with your fellow review members. Here are some of the key elements we want you to keep in mind as you begin the review process:

Assign scores based on given criteria in the RFP and 2011 Corporation for National and Community Service AmeriCorps Application Instructions: Your rating should reflect your opinion of the applicant's ability to meet each criterion provided on the Grant Review Score Sheet. Do not make assumptions about missing background or project information, review only what is included in the application. **The Montana Strategic Initiatives will only be used for ranking - DO NOT penalize the applicant for lack of Montana Strategic Initiatives.

Read for substance: A high-quality application is not always grammatically perfect. Being a good grant reviewer requires an ability to judge the substance of an idea, rather than the manner in which it is presented.

Comment on program quality: Take the time to make thoughtful comments to justify your score; comment on both strengths and weaknesses. Use specific and descriptive phrases in your comments, such as "the applicant did not adequately describe....";"it is unclear whether....";"the applicant should be asked to clarify.....".

Avoid interjecting your own biases: For example, even if you do not think tutoring programs are effective, your opinion should not affect the objective appraisal of a proposal for support of tutoring initiatives.

Comments, both verbal and written, during this process are public documents.

1. Read the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) AmeriCorps Application Guidelines and Instructions
• Prior to reading ANY applications, this is extremely important.
• You will not be able to fairly evaluate a proposal unless you have an understanding of what has been asked by CNCS.

2. Review the Grant Review Score Sheet
• The review questions were taken directly from the application guidelines and will help you read, evaluate and understand the main point.
• Each section of the score sheet corresponds to one major section of the proposal.
• Questions at the beginning of each section will help you focus on the main points.

3. Lead Reviewer(s)
• You will be informed which application(s) you are the lead reviewer by Governor's Office of Community Service Staff.
• Each work group member will be a lead reviewer on at least one application.
• Lead reviewers will lead the work group discussion and interview of the applicant.
• The lead reviewer should have a comprehensive understanding of the assigned application.
• Primary Responsibilities
   - Open the discussion on the application by providing a very brief summary of the proposed program and comment on overall strengths and weaknesses.
   - Lead section discussions. Reviewers must come to consensus on a final score to be awarded in each section before they move on to the next section.
   - The lead reviewer will approve Consensus Review Score Sheet created by Governor's Office of Community Service after consensus has been reached.
   - This page will be sent to the applicant after the final selections are made.

4. Skim all of the applications before you begin scoring
• Understand how applications relate to one another in terms of general strengths and weaknesses.

5. Rate the application on a numerical scale
• Assign a score for each question on a scale of zero to two (score allocation chart included in packet).
• Provide specific comments about strengths and weaknesses on the score sheet that justify your score and identify issues that need to be clarified.

6. Do not comment on the applications themselves
• You may highlight or underline sections of the proposals, but do not write any comments.
• Please include all comments on the score sheet

7. Score Sheet
• Keep your grant review score sheets with you and bring them to the interview process.

8. Consensus Scoring
• Consensus Scores will be determined by the entire work group
• If the work group cannot come to a consensus then scoring will be based on averages of score totals

9. Final Ranking
• Final Ranking is based on the consensus review score sheet, Montana initiatives, and the Governor's Office of Community Service staff recommendation.

10. The Grant Review Workgroup will select one member to present their recommendations to the full commission during the full commission meeting.

Section I. Staff Assessment – 40%

This section will be based on the information provided in the staff risk assessment. The purpose of this section is to allow staff experience in working with applicants on previous grants to be reflected in the grant review scoring process
• This section will be scored on a 0-2 (3 point) scale

A. All Applicants - 18 Possible Points

2011 Staff Application Assessment	Score (0-2)	Comments (Strengths and Weaknesses)
Based upon the staff assessment does the application describe		
1) Program strengths which complement the Commission's existing portfolio and State Service Plan?		
2) Community need(s) to be addressed with AmeriCorps service?		
3) A unique concept that connects community needs and the proposed AmeriCorps service?		
4) Allowable planned member service activities?		
5) A well defined program and organization structure?		
6) The capacity to manage an AmeriCorps program?		
7) A clear understanding of National Service?		
8) A clear and reasonable budget?		
9) CNCS mandated budget and program changes?		
Total	0	

B. Previous OCS Subgrantees Only - 18 Possible Points

2011 Previous Grantee Assessment	Score (0-2)	Comments (Strengths and Weaknesses)
Based upon the staff assessment does the application describe (and, if necessary, steps to overcome)?		
1) Program challenges?		
2) Ability to meet match?		
3) Compliance findings?		
4) Enrollment rate (expectation 100%)?		
5) Retention rate (expectation 90%)?		
6) Performance and progress toward impact		
7) Enrollments/Exits completed within 30 days?		
8) Deadlines met?		
9) Evaluation efforts?		
Total	0	

SECTION I TOTAL	0	Of Possible	18

II. Application and Applicant Info

Are there any changes to the applicants info, or application information? (unscored)	

Section III. through Section V. - 60%
III. Continuation Narrative - 20 Possible Points

2011 AmeriCorps Application	Score (0-2)	Comments (Strengths and Weaknesses)
1) Are there any changes regarding r**ational and approach**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
2) Are there any changes regarding **Member outputs and outcomes**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
3) Are there any changes regarding **organizational capacity**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
4) Are there any changes regarding **the evaluation plan**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
5)Are there any changes regarding **cost effectiveness and budget adequacy**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
6) Are there any changes regarding **cost per Member Service Year**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
7) Is there **clarification information** offered? Are these clarifications reasonable and justified?		
8) Are there any further **continuation changes**? Are these changes reasonable and justified?		
9) Enrollment: If the program enrolled less than 100% of slots received during their last full year of program operation, did they provide an explanation, and describe their plan for improvement?		
Enrollment rate is calculated by dividing regular slots filled plus refill slots filled by regular slots awarded.		
10) Retention: If the program was not able to retain all of your members during their last full year of program operation, did they provide an explanation, and describe their plan for improvement?		
While we recognize retention rates may vary among equally effective programs depending on the program model, we expect grantees to pursue the highest retention rate possible. Retention rate is calculated by dividing the number of members exited with award (full or partial award) by the number of members enrolled.		
Total		Of Possible	20

Multi state Applicants Only - 2 Possible Points

Does the Applicant?

1) Describe the manner and extent to which they consulted with the State Commission in the states in which they plan to operate?			
Total		Of Possible	2

IV. Performance Measurement - 8 Possible Points

2011 AmeriCorps Application	Score (0-2)	Comments (Strengths and Weaknesses)	
Are there any changes to the applicants methods of performance measurement?	**Yes/No**	If yes please answer the below questions	
Does the Applicant?			
1) Describe the overall change they want to see by the end of the three-year grant cycle?			
2) Explain how they will measure impact?			
3) Explain how they will report on this on an annual basis?			
4) Explain how they determined their performance measure targets?			
Total		Of Possible	8

V. Budget - 12 Possible Points

2011 AmeriCorps Application	Score (0-2)	Comments (Strengths and Weaknesses)	
Does the Applicant?			
1) Provide adequate detail regarding all budget amendments?			
2) Incorporate any required corporation increases?			
3) Describe their plan for increasing their overall share of budgeted costs?			
4) Provide a detailed budget for the upcoming year?			
5) Describe sources of match, amount, match classification, and match source?			
6) Meet their match requirement?			
Total		Of Possible	12

Reviewer Score					
Section I Score					
	Total		Of Possible	18	Section Percent	
Section Percent		X	40	=		Section Score

Reviewer Score					
Section III -V. Score					
	Total		Of Possible	42	Section Percent	
Section Percent		X	60	=		Section Score

Final Score		Of 100

Interview Information

Interview Questions

Interview Comments

Montana Initiatives and Expectations Score Sheet

*This score sheet does not affect the application score and is used by the Grant Review Workgroup for ranking purposes only.

Scoring

+	Met <u>&</u> demonstrated experience
✓	Met expectation
-	Did not meet expectation

Montana State Service Plan

Montana State Initiatives
- The Governor's strategic initiative for clean energy
- The Governor and First Lady's strategic initiative for math and science education
- Expand and promote volunteerism in Montana

Does the Applicant?	Score	Comments
- Have a plan to include the Governor's clean energy initiative?		
- Have a plan to include the Governor and First Lady's math and science initiative?		
- Explain the how they intend to expand and promote volunteerism in Montana?		

Montana Expectations for all Programs

- Disability inclusion in the design and delivery of the program
- A collaborative approach to program planning, design, and delivery
- Demonstrated ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant
- Addressing rural, underserved areas of extreme poverty that are not currently served by AmeriCorps programs

Does the Applicant?	Score	Comments
- Explain how their program will be inclusive?		
- Explain how their program will have a collaborative approach to program planning, design, and delivery?		
- Demonstrate ability to successfully administer an AmeriCorps or other federal grant?		
- Address rural, understated areas of extreme poverty?		

The Ranking Process will consider 3 factors: the grant review score sheet, the Montana initiatives and expectations score sheet, and the staff recommendation.